



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

MAY 31 2019

OFFICE OF
GENERAL COUNSEL

Ms. Emma Best
MuckRock News
411A Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02144

RE: Request Number EPA-HQ-2019-006125

Dear Ms. Best:

This letter concerns the above-referenced Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, received by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Freedom of Information Office in which you are seeking:

“Documents mentioning or relating to Anonymous (the hacker movement/collective, see below) or hacktivism (defined as hacking as a form of protest and/or activism) generated between 1 January 2009 and 1 January 2019, including but not limited to:

- * Internal reports, bulletins, warnings and alerts relating to Anonymous or hacktivism
- * Reports from the appropriate IT (Information Technology) or computer offices regarding possible cyber attacks by Anonymous or other hacktivists
- * Reports, bulletins, warnings and alerts relating to or mentioning Anonymous or hacktivism sent to or received from any federal law enforcement or intelligence agencies or any fusion center

- * Incident reports investigating possible hacking activity falling within the office's jurisdiction and allegedly carried out by members of Anonymous or other hacktivist groups

- * Materials generated as a result of any suspected or actual compromise, breach or "dox" (revealing of personal or private information) by Anonymous or other hacktivists

Anonymous has been described by government agencies as a non-hierarchical hacktivist collective. Anonymous uses hacking (and arguably cracking) techniques to register political protest in campaigns known as “#ops.” Best known for their distributed denial of services (DDoS) attacks, past activities have included attacks against the Church of Scientology; Visa, Paypal, and others who withdrew their services from WikiLeaks’ Julian Assange after that group began releasing war documents; #OpTunisia and others purporting to support the Arab Spring; and a campaign that brought down the website of

the Westboro Baptist Church. #Ops are usually marked with the release of a video of a reader in a Guy Fawkes mask using a computer generated voice.”

Your request does not reasonably describe the records you are seeking in a way that will permit EPA employees to identify and locate them. The EPA’s FOIA regulations explain:

“Whenever possible, your request should include specific information about each record sought, such as the title or name, author, recipient, and subject matter. If known, you should include any file designations or descriptions for the records that you want. The more specific you are about the records or type of records that you want, the more likely

EPA will be able to identify and locate records responsive to your request.” 40 C.F.R. § 2.102(c).

We would like to provide you the opportunity to clarify the records that you are seeking so that EPA can process your request. As indicated in 40 C.F.R. § 2.102(c), please include any specific information about the records you seek, including program, region, names of people to search, or a more detailed description of the records’ subject matter. Additionally, the FOIA does not require federal agencies to respond to questions so please consider that as you are modifying your request.

Since you have not provided a telephone number we are unable to connect with you directly. Please contact Wendy Schumacher via email at schumacher.wendy@epa.gov or (202) 566-2513 with your clarification or I can be reached at (202) 566-1667 if you have any questions concerning this letter. If we do not hear back from you by June 21, 2019, we will administratively close your request.

Cordially,



Larry F. Gottesman
Agency FOIA Officer